1608/4345

A

LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr. Dean *Swift*, *&c.*

Price Three Pence.

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BRITISH MUSEUM
30 MAY 72

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LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr. Dean *Swift*,

Occaſion'd by a

SATIRE

Said to be written by Him,

ENTITLED,

A DEDICATION *to a* GREAT MAN, *concerning* DEDICATIONS. *Diſcovering, among other wonderful* SECRETS, *what will be the preſent Poſture of Affairs a thouſand Years hence.*

By a Sparkiſh Pamphleteer of BUTTON's Coffee-Houſe.

LONDON,
Printed for *James Roberts* in *Warwick-Lane*. 1719.

A

LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr. Dean *Swift*, *&c.*

Dear Doctor,

I Thank you, in the Name of the Publick, for your continuing to be uſeful, notwithſtanding you are a dignify'd Churchman. The celebrated Lord *Falkland*, talking of the Clergy in the Houſe of Commons, ſaid, *That as their Preaching was the Cauſe of their Preferment, ſo*

ſo they made their Preferment the Cauſe of their not Preaching; and, when I knew you were made a Dean, I grew in mortal Fear that you would live *like your Brethren*, and be good for nothing. I confeſs a Deanary is a very good Reaſon for being idle; and we infer that you are of the ſame Mind, from your not having once ſet the three Kingdoms a-laughing in five Years together; whereas you uſed formerly, when you had Wit in Pocketfulls, and no Money, to be tickling the Sides of Mankind once a Week, at leaſt: What a Misfortune is it, that the rich Man ſhould always thus ſpoil the merry Fellow?

I my ſelf find it by Experience, that Plenty is a damn'd Baulk to Mirth; for I am always dull in Proportion to my Caſh, and witty in Proportion to the Feebleneſs of my Purſe: When I am Maſter of a few Half Crowns, you would ſwear, by my Looks and Heavineſs, I were an elder Brother, or an Alderman, ſuch a magiſterial Stupidity do I carry about me: However, for my Comfort,

fort, I am ſeldom attack'd by this Fit of Lethargy above *once a Year.*

On the other Hand, when there is a Famine in my Fob, my Head is in the beſt Plight in the World, and I can write a Pamphlet in half an Hour. *NEC ONUS, NEC FRÆNUM*; a Colt, or a Girl, or a young Cat, has not more Tricks and Livelineſs.

One Day, (I ſhall never forget it!) as I was raiſing a *Ghoſt*, or deſcribing a *Monſter*, or committing a *horrid and bloody Murder*, Faith, I can't tell which, but one of them it was, and the Preſs and the Hawkers both ſtood ſtill for it; I ſay, upon that ſelf-ſame Day, when I began, with my uſual Elegance, to flouriſh and form my Periods, I felt an unuſual Slowneſs in my Invention; and my Fancy, though I pump'd it again and again, and drew it by all its Teats, would not yield one Drop of Milk, and I could not, for the Heart of me, *make my Readers wonder.*

In

In this deplorable and never-enough to be lamented Dulneſs, what does me I do, but ſearch firſt in my Noddle, and then in my Breeches, for the *ſtrange* Ground of my preſent Woe and Unfruitfulneſs; and, to my great Aſtoniſhment, in a private Corner of my Pocket lurk'd a crooked Sixpence, *unfelt 'till then by human Finger.* The Reaſon of its long Impriſonment was, that in many Months I had never ſent my Hand on any Meſſage into my Pocket, as well knowing *it had no Buſineſs there.*

As ſoon as I had laid my Hands on this *ſingle Inhabitant*, I reſolv'd to make an Example of him, and drown'd him immediately, without Mercy, in half a Pint of *Sherry.* I then went readily and chearfully to work, and having now neither Lett nor Moleſtation, finiſh'd my Ghoſt with good Reputation to my ſelf; for it was reckon'd the very beſt and moſt terrible Apparition that haunted *Grub-ſtreet* that Evening.

I have

I have not met with *ſuch another Obſtacle* in all the numerous Pamphlets which I have ſince produc'd. While I have any Caſh, I neither think, nor ſpeak, nor write, but ramble, and drink, and pay; and when I can pull out no more Money, I pull out my Inkhorn, and grow witty again. *N. B.* For three Weeks paſt, I have been a Wit without Interruption.

I appeal to you, dear Doctor, whether the Caſe, which I have been here deſcribing, was not once yours, while your Circumſtances were yet but lean, and your Purſe *Grey-Hound-gutted.*

I was therefore not a little ſurpriz'd to find you writing, in Spight of your Gold and your Deanary. I at firſt imagin'd there might be a general Famine in *Ireland*, and that you were reduc'd to dine upon your Wit again; but the Mirth and Feſtivity of your Book reliev'd me inſtantly from all Apprehenſion of this Kind, and I have ſince conſider'd you as only venting your Spleen againſt

a Piece of fulſome Roguery, which continues ſtill to go on in ſhameleſs Luxuriancy.

Generally ſpeaking, you can as eaſily grope out Colour and Complexion with your Fingers, and pore into the Nature of Harmony with your Eyes, as diſcover the Characters of Great Perſons in the Deſcriptions which are made of them in Dedications.

Your *Eſſay* upon that Subject was certainly very uſeful and ſeaſonable; and I think you are own'd to have executed it with juſt Wit and Severity.

Will the Quality never ſee, that in theſe Panegyricks which Authors *ſell* them, they are firſt bely'd and then cheated? The Language, in moſt of thoſe Caſes, is in Truth no other than this — *My Lord, give me* 20 *Guineas and I will deceive you.* Every Man who is deck'd in a Character which does not become him, is ſo far dreſs'd in a Fool's Coat and Cap, and expos'd to the Grin and Contempt of all

all that can ſee it, that is, every Body but himſelf.

Fame is a fleeting tender Thing, and even where it is due, it is loſt or corrupted when beſtow'd by improper or mercenary Hands.

I knew a pretty young Girl in a Country Village, who, over-fond of her own Praiſe, became a Property to a poor Rogue in the Pariſh, who was ignorant of all Things but *Fawning*. This Fellow us'd to wait on Mrs. *Betty* every Morning, and ſhe being a Shopkeeper, his uſual Salutation was, *Lord love your Heart, Mrs.* Betty, *you be main handſome, will you give me a Pipe of Tobacco? Am I,* Iſaac? (anſwers Mrs. *Betty*) *let me ſee your Box*; and then ſhe fills it. Thus *Iſaac* extolls her out of a Quartern of *Cut and Dry* every Day ſhe lives; and tho' the young Woman is really handſome, ſhe and her Beauty are become a By-word, and, all the Country round, ſhe is call'd nothing but *Iſaac*'s *Beſt Virginia*.

There is but one Way of carrying Flattery to a greater Height than it is

already arriv'd to. All Patrons have been, Time out of Mind, *perfectly* wiſe, *perfectly* juſt, *perfectly* valiant, *perfectly* witty, and *perfectly* beautiful; all Patrons are ſo, becauſe all Authors have ſaid ſo. Now what remains to be done for the Improvement of Flattery? even this: Let the Poet buckle himſelf in Armour, and, mounting a mettl'd Steed, ſally forth into the Streets and Highways, and challenge to ſingle Combat any bold Varlet who dare aſſert that all the reſt of the World are, in the leaſt Degree, comparable for Virtue, and Beauty, and all that, to one ſingle Lord or Lady, who is, perhaps, *if known*, deſpis'd by all the reſt of the World.

I expect the Thanks of our Authors for this Hint of mine, which yet I have borrow'd from themſelves. Conſidering what ſeveral of them have threaten'd long ago, and do, upon Occaſion, ſtill threaten, I have waited a good while to ſee them graſp the Lance, and fall into the immediate Practice of this Piece of Author-Errantry, after having moſt humbly in-

invok'd his Grace, or her Ladyſhip, to be propitious, *&c.*

Says one Author,

—— *I know, Sir, your Modeſty will be tortur'd by what I have here aſſerted, but I am reſolv'd to maintain my Point to the laſt Drop of my Pen.*

This Author, I doubt, carry'd his *Quixotiſm* too far; he threatens to attack the *noble Squire* himſelf, in Defence of the *noble Squire* himſelf.

Another runs his Head againſt the Univerſe, in Behalf of his Lord and Patron, and cries,

My Lord,

In Spight of the Growlings of an envious World, I will maintain it, in the Face of Mankind, that your Lordſhip is, in all Reſpects, the Only moſt —— *and* moſt —— *and* moſt —— *and* moſt ——

He goes on in telling a great many *more* Lies, which I do not care to repeat: You ſee he makes a Curr

of

of the Univerſe, and ſets it a-growling at *my Lord*, who is a much greater Man than Mr. Univerſe himſelf: And then he threatens to run Mankind through the Body, if they do not own with him, that *my Lord* is, in *all Reſpects*, the ſweeteſt Creature in the three Pariſhes.

A Third boldly pronounces,

—— *This Character, which I have drawn of your Grace I will ſtand by, and ſupport, while I have Life or Limb.* This was a She-Author, and whether by her *ſupporting* and her *Limbs*, ſhe did not mean bawdy, I am not ſure: But I think the Meaning of the next is plain, when ſhe tells her *youthful Peer*, that

Though he had committed ſufficient Ravages among the Sex, yet the Lovelineſs of his Looks, and the Firmneſs of his Make, *made her conclude he was but beginning.*

In this Manner it is that you Poets and Parſons *create* Gods, and *invent* Religions, and then force us, that are

to

are but Laymen and Readers, to worſhip the one, and ſubmit to the other, on Pain of being damn'd and knock'd down.

And it is moſt natural, in the Buſineſs of Falſhood and Forgery, for thoſe that have an Intereſt in their Maintainance, to appear, as much as is poſſible, in great Earneſt; and, in Order to it, to puniſh and inveigh againſt all that dare ſee ſo well as to diſtinguiſh the monſtrous Features and Deformities of your Deities and Doctrines.

Suppoſe now I cannot, with all my *Opticks* perceive, that the Eyes of a *certain Earl* are ſo very brillant, or, that the Ceremonies of a *certain Church* are ſo very decent; you muſt, to be conſiſtent with your ſelves, and of Importance with the *Multitude*, cenſure and deſtroy me, for being an obſtinate Enemy to the *Church* and the *Earl*; for ſhould the People, by hearing my Reaſons, come to embrace my Opinions, it might be my Turn next to direct and govern *your ſeeing* and *your believing*.

I ſhould

I ſhould not, dear Doctor, have fallen into theſe Reflections *here*, had it not come ſuddenly into my Mind, that they are not unlike thoſe I have heard you make formerly, before you were *convinc'd* and *converted* by a *Deanary*.

Some have wonder'd how Doctor *Swift*, whoſe Affection to the Church was never doubted, tho' his Chriſtianity was ever queſtion'd, ſhould think the worſe of ſome of the Clergy for their Trampling upon Loyalty and Oaths; and, for all his Reverence for the late Q—— and her Counſellors, ſhould make ſuch honourable Mention of King *George* and his Miniſters; but as it is well known you never were a Slave to Conſtancy and Principle, we can eaſily account for this your Behaviour, and in Defence of it ſay, That in this Inſtance, you have put off Prejudice, and reſum'd your Underſtanding.

Beſides this, others alledge, that your Panegyrick is contradictory to your Banter upon *Dedications*: But this you have your ſelf anſwer'd in,

in your Preface to the fourth Edition, in which you have the following Lines.

'As to the *Characters* and *Inſcriptions* at the End, I ſtill think them ſo 'juſt, that I am not like to repent of 'them; which may ſerve to ſhew me 'as much a Friend to well-grounded 'Panegyrick, as I ever ſhall be a Foe 'to all falſe Colouring. There is no 'ſuch Thing as Praiſe and Blame, 'where they are not apply'd; and as 'I take upon me to expoſe the one, I 'think I need aſk no Pardon for at-'tempting to practice the other.

It remains now for me to entertain you with ſome Remarks on the preſent State of this Town, which no Man knew ſome Years ago better than your ſelf.

And to begin with that which, with Gentlemen of your Faculty, *claims Precedence* of the King himſelf, the GOOD CHURCH of *ENGLAND*, I am ſorry to tell you, ſhe is in the ſame puny, *complaining* Condition, which you, Mr. Dean, left her in; and lan-

guiſhes ſo immoderately, that if ſhe do not very ſhortly kick up her *reverend* Heel, and depart this *eſtabliſh'd* Life, your Brethren, the *Parſons*, are *falſe Prophets*; for they have not only, *with one Mouth*, predicted her Downfal theſe thirty Years, but are, *at this very Juncture*, preaching the *paralytick old Lady's Funeral-Oration* every Sunday that paſſes: So that if ſhe be not already ſtone-dead, there's no believing the Caſſock.

The *Spreading of Reports* that the King is *in Danger*, or dead, is generally, if not always, taken as a *Mark of Diſaffection*, and as ſuch puniſhable. If the forging of Tales concerning the *Danger of the Church* may be judg'd by the like Rule, I doubt moſt of her *pious Sons* will be found *errant Baſtards*.

The preſent *Tottering State* of that *Venerable Matron*, proceeds from the *dreadful Power* which a *new Act* of Parliament gives to *old Women* to teach Children to read. From hence it is orthodoxly concluded, that the ſaid *old Women* will, like *Giants* and Generals,

Generals, head an *Army of Infants*, arm'd with Pſalters and Horn-books, againſt the *Hierarchy*. Add to all this another *terrible Circumſtance*; a Man may *now* venture to hear *Tom Bradbury* without being ruin'd by the *Forfeiture* of his *Place*, and the *neglected Prieſthood* can have *no other* Vengeance upon ſuch a *Delinquent*, but barely CURSING him.

A Quaker in *Kent*, when he was preſs'd by a zealous Tory to conform to the *eſtabliſh'd Church*, made this *roguiſh*, *reaſonable* Anſwer, *Friend, thee may'ſt ſpare thy Breath and Perſwaſion; I will never be of that* CHURCH *which is always in Danger*: And ſome People, as arch and *atheiſtical* as our Quaker, are ready to tell you, that neither their Principles nor *their Noſes* will allow them to communicate with a *Church*, which, if our *lateſt Advices* from the *Pulpit be true*, is already *ſtinking* in her *Sepulchre*.

The Right Reverend and right learned Lord Biſhop of *London*, differs from many of his Clergy upon

this Head, and ſeems of Opinion, that the *eſtabliſh'd Church* has ſtill *ſome* Exiſtence.

This *orthodox*, *primitive* Biſhop has lately writ a *perſpicuous* and *perſwaſive* Epiſtle to the Prieſts of his Dioceſe, and in it warns them, with a paternal Tenderneſs, againſt the *new* Doxologies of *ancient Hereticks*. Beſides, he tells them, that if they neglect their *Duty to God and the King*, they are liable to pay five Pounds; and his Lordſhip, no doubt, knew what Arguments were like to be of moſt Force with *them*.

We have had lately two new Plays; one is, Sir *Walter Raleigh*, a Tragedy: It is acted with good Applauſe at the *New Houſe*, its own native Worth hiding, in a good Degree, the Inſufficiency of ſome of the Actors. You will find in it many beautiful Thoughts and Lines.

The other is a new Play of an *ancient Poet*; it is call'd, *The Maſquerade*, and acted in *Drury-Lane*: It fill'd

fill'd the Houſe a few Nights with People and Hiſſing; but that Theatre never fails having a large Audience, tho' they act *Charles Johnſon* or *Tom Thumb*.

This Winter has produc'd but few Pamphlets which the Town has vouchſafed to ſmile on. You know, to be ſure, what Acceptance *your* Eſſay upon Dedications has met with; and there is an Apology for Parſon *Alberoni*, which has already run to the *ninth Edition*. This little Book is ſuch a Thorn in the Sides of the Clergy, that it is every where taken for granted you are the Author of it. So that you are this Year, as you uſed to be, at the Head of all the Pamphleteers in *Great Britain*.

I am juſt now told, that the Right Honourable the *Players* and *Privy Counſellors* in the *Old Houſe*, have found out that they are a *Miniſtry within themſelves*, and have notify'd the ſame, *in Form*, to my *Lord Chamberlain*, by the Mouth of their *Plenipo* and *Copyer in Chief*, the well bred Mr. *Colley Cibber*: But, I hear, *his Grace* frowns

frowns upon these *Affairs of State*, and is almost provok'd to shut up *their Palace*, because they were saucy to him, *and pleaded their Patent for it.*

Vice and Dulness, *Dear Doctor*, never reign'd more irresistibly, than they do at the very Time of the *signing and sealing hereof*. Our Wits leave us in Pairs; *Garth* and *Rowe* are just gone, and others, of *their Spirit and Genius*, are in a fair Way to follow them; but Debauchery, *Beaus*, and Insolence, gather Ground and Numbers. For my Part, I cannot help foreseeing and dreading the Day, when it will be as unfashionable to be Witty, as 'tis now to be Good-natur'd or Sober.

I am,

Covent-Garden, *Jan.* 30, 171$\frac{8}{9}$.

Dear Doctor,
your Friend
and Servant.

P. A.

BRITISH MUSEUM 30 MAY 78